THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As a part of the Unviersity Grants Commission (UGC)'s initiatives to bring in academic reforms in higher education, the UGC has written to the Unviersities emphasizing, *inter-alia*, the need for reforming the external written examination and for making a beginning in this regard by introducing semester system. The Universities have been advised that the duration of the semester, number of contact hour per paper, per semester and relative weightage of continuous internal assessment and semester-end examination needs to be prescribed; unambiguously.

(c) to (e) The semester system is in operation in several unviersities. Universities having Engineering/Technology and some other professional courses are mostly running on semester system. The system gives emphasis on continuous internal assessment and reduced the written Examination component to a reasonable level.

Performance of Bihar Madarsa Boards Students

1751. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Pratham, an NGO that conducted a survey on the performance of Class X students across the country recently, has listed the students of Bihar Madarsa Board on top of other students under the ICSE and CBSE affiliations;

(b) whether the students of Bihar Madarsa Board have scored a success rate of 91.4 per cent in Class X examinations, with the CBSE students falling behind at 86.4 per cent; and

(c) if so, whether Government would encourage setting up more Madarsa Boards in other States, to improve the performance of minority students?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI. ASHRAF FATMI): (a) Yes sir, News reports on such a study/survey have appeared in a section of media.

(b) and (c) Since Bihar Madarsa Board, the ICSE and the CBSE conduct their respective examinations for Class X or equivalent, any comparison of pass percentages would not be appropriate. Each State is free to establish its own State Madarsa Board.

Universalisation of secondary education

1752. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:
SHRI KRISHAN LAL BALMIKI:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is formulating a scheme for universalisation of secondary education;

(b) if so, by when the scheme would be finalized;

(c) what would be the funding pattern of the scheme; and